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A sensor support base (10) having a rigid inner portion (11) and a relatively flexible outer ring portion (13) removably attached around its periphery for adhesive application to a patient is disclosed. The relatively flexible outer ring portion (13) has a relatively rigid segment (23) for assisting in attachment to the periphery of the inner portion (11). A layer of absorbent material (29) on the upper surface of the outer ring portion (13) is used for absorbing perspiration of the patient.

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IMPROVED SENSOR SUPPORT PLATE WITH DETACHABLE
RING
RELATED APPLICATIONS

This is a continuation-in-part of patent application
entitled: "Improved Sensor Support Base and Method of
Application", Serial Number 118,441, November 9, 1987 which
5 is a continuation-in-part of patent application entitled:
External Uterine Contraction Monitoring Device, Serial
Number 915,120, filed by Edward H. Hon, M.D., Edward D. Hon
and Robert W. Hon, on October 2, 1986, which was a
Cutaneous Blood Pressure Measuring Apparatus and Method,
10 Serial Number 780,398, filed by Edward H. Hon, M.D. and
Edward D. Hon, on September 26, 1985, and a
continuation-in-part of patent application entitled
Apparatus for Measuring Blood Pressure, Serial No.
06/858,713, filed by Edward H. Hon. M.D. and Edward D. Hon,
15 on May 2, 1986.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In the co-pending application entitled: "Improved
Sensor Support Base and Method of Application", Serial No.
118,441 a support base for a monitoring device for
20 monitoring the contractions of a patient in labor was
disclosed. The apparatus consisted of a concave support
base having a central relatively rigid transducer holding
member and a relatively flexible outer ring portion.

OBJECTIONS OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

25 It is an object of the present invention to provide a
support based that is easy to manufacture.

It is another object of the present invention to
provide a support base which provides easier alignment of
the outer ring portion to the inner portion.

30 It is another object of the present invention to
provide an improved support base which is less likely to
come off during use.

It is another object of the present invention to
provide a support plate that may be more easily and more
35 inexpensively made.

These and other objects of the present invention will
be evident from a review of the specification and the
accompanying drawings.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In the present invention the improved support base is designed to be adhesively applied to the abdomen of the patient. It is substantially concave and consists of a first inner portion having an opening for receiving a transducer. The inner portion is relatively rigid in relationship to a second relatively flexible outer ring portion which extends substantially around the periphery of the inner portion of the support base. In the preferred embodiment the support base is circular.

The first relatively rigid inner portion is made of hard plastic, while the second relatively flexible outer ring portion is made of a relatively soft material, such as plastic or rubber material. This permits the support base to fit a wide range of abdominal sizes from the relatively small to the very large. Also, the flexible outer ring portion, due to its flexibility, may be more easily removed from the patient after use.

The outer flexible outer ring portion has a relatively rigid central portion which is force fit over a ridge on the periphery of the inner portion. In the preferred embodiment, an absorbent material overlays a portion of the top of the relatively flexible outer ring portion, and an absorbent sponge material is located on the bottom surface of the inner portion, substantially surrounding the opening in the inner portion.

Further details of the invention will be evident from a review of the following descriptions of the drawings and the detailed description of the invention

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a top perspective view of the present invention.

Figure 2 is a side sectioned view of the inner rigid portion of the support base taken along section lines 2-2 of Figure 3;

Figure 3 is a bottom view of the support base of Figure 1;

Figure 4 is a top view of the outer relatively flexible ring; and

Figure 5 is a side sectional view of the outer ring taken along lines 5-5 of Figure 4.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Making reference to Figures 1-5, a substantially concave support base 10 comprising an relatively rigid inner portion 11 and a flexible outer ring portion 13 is shown. An upstanding hollow tubular member 12 is mounted perpendicular substantially at the center of the inner portion 11.

10 The hollow tubular member 12 may be formed integrally with the inner portion 11 of the support base 10 or removably attached by other means, such as by threads, force fitting or other coupling means. The tubular member 12 is threaded 15 at its upper end and has an internal diameter of approximately 1 inch.

Slot 17 in the tubular member 12 is adapted to permit electrical connections to pass through the wall of the tubular member 12. The upper portion of the hollow tubular member extends approximately 1 1/2 inches above the top surface 19 of the inner portion 11.

The inner portion 11, in the preferred embodiment, is circular and the outside diameter of the inner portion 11 is approximately 3 inches. The inner portion 11 is made of a relatively rigid plastic material and the outer relatively flexible portion 13 is made of a soft flexible rubber or plastic material. The support base 10 has an outer diameter large enough to provide a sufficient surface area in contact with the skin of the patient to withstand vertical lifting of the sensor support plate. It has been found that an outside diameter of approximately 5 inches for the outer ring portion is highly acceptable. The first inner portion 11 has a thickness of about 1/8 inch.

The outer ring portion 13 has a relatively rigid central ring 23 at the periphery of the inner opening which is approximately 1/4 inch in width and 1/8 inch thick. The central ring 23 fits over the ridge 21, and force fits against the shoulder 25 of the ring 21, resting on flange 26. The rigid ring is made of plastic.

In an alternative embodiment the outer ring portion

may be made so as to have a thickened portion at its inner portion for directly force fitting over the ring 21.

While in the preferred embodiment the outer ring is attached by a force fit, other means of attachment, such as
5 threads, clamps, adhesive, or other means may be employed.

The outer ring portion surrounding the relatively rigid central ring 23 is a relatively flexible plastic or rubber member 30. An adhesive layer 34 covers its lower surface which is in turn covered by an easily removable wax
10 paper backing 27 conventionally used in medical adhesive devices. The top surface of the outer ring portion 13 is covered by an absorbent material 29 having small openings 39 that pass through the flexible plastic or rubber portion 30.

15 The adhesive 24 is of a medical grade and is applied to the bottom 36 surface of the support base by conventional means. This may be sprayed on or applied by use of a double sided adhesive.

A series of openings 31 are formed in the inner
20 portion 11 to permit the skin to "breathe" and also to permit a solvent solution to pass through the openings to disssolve the adhesive so as to facilitate removal of the support plate from the skin.

A flexible membrane, not shown, may be provided to
25 cover the opening 33 so that any transducer in the opening 33 is maintained away from physical contact with the patient.

It has been found that during labor body perspiration can cause the adhesive contact with the skin to be
30 loosened. To prevent the perspiration from loosening the adhesive, a highly absorbent sponge material 35 is applied to the bottom surface 16 of the inner portion 11 surrounding the opening 33. The highly absorbent materials, may be paper, such as use in breast shields,
35 disposable diapers and cotton napkins, sponges, or fabrics such as cotton.

The highly absorbent materials serve to prevent perspiration from coming into contact with the adhesive in the vicinity of the perimeter of the support base, reducing

the likelihood that the support base will accidentally lift from the patient. The absorbent material 39 and 35 also permit the evaporation of the perspiration through the openings 39 and 31.

5 While in the preferred embodiment the inner portion 11 is plastic, it could be made out of water absorbent materials that hold their shape, such as pressed cardboard or paper mache. Such materials can be easily and inexpensively manufactured and would hold their shape for
10 substantially periods of time, just like a paper plate. In such a case, the absorbent sponge 35 would be unnecessary.

In operation, the skin of the patient is cleansed with alcohol and then swabbed with a quick drying solution e.g., collodion to provide a uniform base for the adhesive as
15 well as a readily dissolvable layer which permits easy removal of the sensor support base at the termination of the procedure.

Once the patient is prepared, the outer ring portion 13 is fitted over the inner portion 11 and the paper
20 backing 27 is removed from the outer ring portion. The support base is then attached to abdomen of the patient. The support base is maintained in contact with the patient until it is desired to remove it. This is accomplished by applying a solvent, such as alcohol, through the openings
25 31 and 39 to the area. This can be done by spray or cloth. It has been found to particularly advantageous to apply the solution around the periphery of the support base while gently lifting the periphery of the flexible outer ring portion 13 of the support base 10. The outer ring portion
30 13 can then be removed for the inner portion 11 and disposed of or the entire support plate 10 can be thrown away.

It is recognized that the absorbent material 35 and 29 may not be required on all contraction support plates, but
35 it may be desirable, due to the additional cost, to employ such configuration only for those patients in those climatic conditions where it is believed that it will be necessary. It has been found that most patients do not require this feature. Also, while the apparatus has been

described in association with use on the abdomen of a patient for recording contractions, the claimed invention may be readily adapted for use in the recording of other data, used at other locations of the patient, such as
5 respiration.

While the present invention has been described with regards to the preferred embodiment, it is recognized that other variation of the present invention can be made without departing from the inventive concept described
10 herein.

What is Claimed is:

- 1 1. A sensor support comprising a support base, having
2 an opening therein for supporting a transducer sensor said
3 support base having a relatively rigid inner portion and a
4 relatively flexible outer ring portion removably attached
5 to at least a portion of the periphery of said relatively
6 rigid inner portion.
- 1 2. A sensor support of Claim 1 in which said outer
2 ring portion comprises soft flexible rubber.
- 1 3. The sensor support of Claim 1 in which said outer
2 ring portion comprises soft flexible plastic.
- 1 4. The sensor support of Claim 1 in which said inner
2 portion comprises a relatively rigid plastic.
- 1 5. The sensor support of Claim 1 in which said inner
2 portion comprises a paper product.
- 1 6. The sensor support of Claim 5 in which said inner
2 portion comprises cardboard.
- 1 7. The sensor support of Claim 1 in which said outer
2 ring portion is relatively rigid at the portion surrounding
3 the periphery of said inner portion.
- 1 8. The sensor support of Claim 7 in which said rigid
2 portion of said outer ring portion extends substantially
3 around the entire periphery of said inner portion.
- 1 9. The sensor support of Claim 7 in which said outer
2 ring portion has adhesive means attached to its lower
3 surface.
- 1 10. The sensor support of Claim 1 in which a flexible
2 membrane covers said opening in said support base.
- 1 11. A sensor support comprising a support base, including
2 means for supporting a transducer sensor, said support base
3 having, an upper and a lower surface and a moisture
4 absorbent material on at least a portion of the upper
5 surface of said support base.
- 1 12. The sensor support of Claim 11 including
2 absorbent material on the lower surface surrounding said
3 opening in the support base.
- 1 13. The sensor support of Claim 12 in which said
2 absorbent material is an absorbent paper.

1 14. The sensor support of Claim 12 in which said
2 absorbent material is sponge.

1 15. A flexible flat adhesive ring member comprising a
2 thin layer of a relatively flexible material, said ring
3 member having a central opening and a relatively rigid
4 material substantially surrounding said opening, said
5 flexible material having adhesive applied to its bottom
6 surface.

1 16. The adhesive ring of Claim 15 in which said
2 flexible material is formed integrally with said
3 relatively rigid material.

1 17. The ring of Claim 15 including absorbent material
2 on at least a portion of the upper surface of said ring.

1 18. The ring of Claim 17 in which said absorbent
2 material is an absorbent fabric.

1 19. The ring of Claim 17 in which said flexible
2 material has openings there through.

1 20. The ring of Claim 17 in which said absorbent
2 material is absorbent paper.

1 21. The ring of Claim 17 in which said absorbent
material is sponge.

1/1

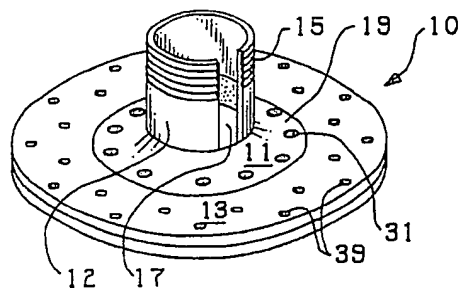


FIG. 1

FIG. 3

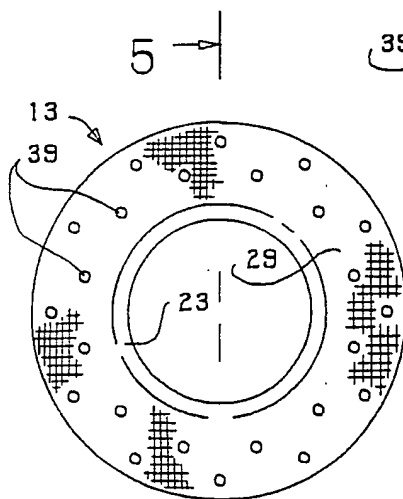
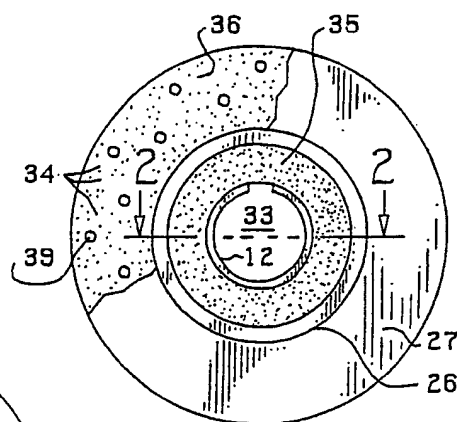


FIG. 4

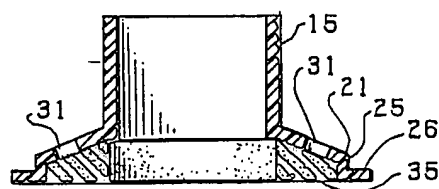


FIG. 2

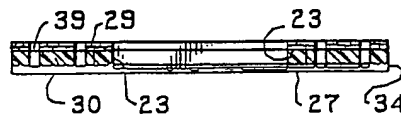
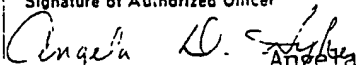


FIG. 5

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No. PCT/US89/04572

I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER (if several classification symbols apply, indicate all) *		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC		
IPC(4) A61B 5/10		
U.S. CL. 128/640,775,802		
II. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum Documentation Searched ⁷		
Classification System	Classification Symbols	
U.S.	128/639,640,774,775,778,780,782,798,802,803, 662.03,662.04,641,672,691	
Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation to the Extent that such Documents are Included in the Fields Searched *		
III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT *		
Category *	Citation of Document, ¹¹ with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages ¹²	Relevant to Claim No. ¹³
Y	US,A, 4,355,643 (LAUGHLIN) 26 October 1982. See the entire document.	1-11, 15-16
A	US,A, 3,824,988 (SOLDNER) 23 July 1974. See the entire document.	1-21
Y	US,A, 4,556,066 (SEMROW) 03 December 1985. See the entire document.	9-11, 15-16
A	US,A, 4,401,125 (TAYLOR) 30 August 1983. See the entire document.	1-21
Y	US,A, 3,859,984 (LANGLEY) 14 January 1975. See the entire document.	10
<p>* Special categories of cited documents: ¹⁰</p> <p>"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance</p> <p>"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date</p> <p>"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)</p> <p>"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means</p> <p>"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed</p> <p>"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention</p> <p>"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step</p> <p>"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.</p> <p>"A" document member of the same patent family</p>		
IV. CERTIFICATION		
Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search		Date of Mailing of this International Search Report
17 December 1989		25 JAN 1990
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ISA/US		 Angela D. Sykes